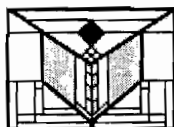


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Catherine Glidden/STB
10/03/2005 03:14 PM

To amedin@parks.ca.gov
cc
bcc

Subject STB Undertaking for AB-874 Sierra Northern Railway -
Abandonment Exemption -

Dear Anne Marie Medin,

I am responding to the California Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) May 3, 2005 letter in which it requested additional information regarding the proposed abandonment in AB-874X, Sierra Northern Railway -- Abandonment Exemption - in Yolo County, CA. The attached cultural resources assessment, entitled Section 106 Assessment for the City of West Sacramento's Agreement to Acquire the Sierra Northern Railroad "Clarksburg Branch" Right-of-Way addresses the specific questions in the information request. According to Sierra Northern Railway (Sierra), a hard copy of the report was hand delivered to your office on September 19, 2005.

As I mentioned to you on the phone, the Federal undertaking that is subject to Section 106 in this case, is the Surface Transportation Board's (Board) approval of the railroad abandonment including any salvage activities that would occur once the Section 106 process has been completed. However, the trail construction part of the project discussed in the cultural resources assessment would come under the jurisdiction of the City of West Sacramento, not the Board.

Based on the cultural resources assessment, the Board finds that the four residential structures and three earthen ditches that were identified in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) are not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). One archaeological site identified within the APE, CA-YOL-132, is eligible for listing in the National Register. However, the site is located under a levee and well underneath the ballast of the rail line. Sierra has indicated to SEA that it does not intend to remove more than 7 of 8 inches of ballast in the vicinity of the archaeological site. The railroad also does not intend to place equipment on or near the archaeological site that would in any way damage or alter the integrity of the site. As such, salvage operations will not result in ground disturbance activities that would affect the archaeological site.

Considering the above, STB finds that the undertaking will have no adverse effect to historic properties pursuant to 36 CFR 800.5(b). STB will, however, ensure that Sierra contact the SHPO, STB, and any Federally recognized tribes that have an interest in the project, in the event that any unanticipated archaeological discoveries are uncovered in the course of Sierra's salvage activities pursuant to the provisions outlined at 36 CFR 800.13.

Should you have any questions or concerns regarding this project or our finding, or need clarification of any kind, please feel free to call me at 202-565-1542.

Sincerely,

Catherine Glidden
Environmental Protection Specialist
Surface Transportation Board
Section of Environmental Analysis
Washington, DC 20590